

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MISSISSIPPI

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY2028 – FY2032

410-00



1. Comprehensive Mission Statement

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), as the state's primary economic development agency, strengthens Mississippi's economy by supporting business retention and expansion, recruiting new business investment, advancing trade, tourism, film, energy, military affairs, minority and small business development, asset investment, and grant administration. MDA serves Mississippi's existing and prospective business community, local governments, economic development organizations, and statewide partners working to create economic opportunity for Mississippians.

2. Statement of Agency Philosophy

MDA conducts its work with integrity, accountability, excellence, transparency, and a commitment to measurable results. The agency seeks to foster sustainable economic growth through structured programs, prudent stewardship of public resources, and partnerships with communities, companies, universities, nonprofits, federal agencies, local economic developers, and other public-sector partners. MDA values innovation, collaboration, professionalism, and continuous staff development so Mississippi can compete effectively for investment, jobs, tourism activity, and sustainable economic growth.

3. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

Statewide Goal #1 – Economic Development

To develop a robust state economy that provides opportunities for productive employment for all Mississippians.

Category: Business Climate — Relevant Benchmark #1

Mississippi's business climate is a key factor in location decisions for new corporate investment and expansions of existing businesses. Primary metrics considered include:

- State business tax climate, including comparisons across business taxes, individual income taxes, sales taxes, unemployment insurance rates, and property taxes.
- Energy price per million British thermal units (BTUs): commercial sector.
- Energy price per million British thermal units (BTUs): industrial sector.
- Annual percentage change in resident population.

Category: Commercial Activity — Relevant Benchmark #2

MDA's mission supports higher levels of commercial activity across business development, trade, tourism, film, energy, site development, community development, and related programs. Primary metrics considered include:

- Per capita gross domestic product.
- Percentage contribution of the manufacturing sector to state gross domestic product.
- Percentage contribution of the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector to state gross domestic product.
- Volume of cargo activity at the state's ports, measured in TEUs and tonnage.
- Number of passengers enplaning and deplaning at the state's airports.
- Number and frequency of passenger and cargo flights.
- Tourism measured by number of visitors and dollars generated.
- Number of new technology start-ups.
- Venture capital investments measured in dollars and number of deals.

Category: Job Growth — Relevant Benchmark #3

MDA works with local and regional economic development organizations, utility partners, elected officials, and other stakeholders to support private-sector job creation from new and existing industries. Primary metrics considered include:

- Net job growth.
- Annual percentage change in non-farm jobs.
- Number of jobs in MDA targeted industries, including advanced manufacturing, aerospace, agribusiness,

- automotive, energy, healthcare, and shipbuilding.
- Number of jobs in the manufacturing sector.
- Number of jobs in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector.
- Number of jobs associated with new technology start-ups.
- Number of new businesses and jobs resulting from MDA global business contacts, including national recruitment, international investment, and trade.
- Number of new businesses and jobs resulting from MDA minority and small business development contacts.

Category: Employment and Income — Relevant Benchmark #4

- Average pay and total payroll of jobs associated with new technology start-ups.

Statewide Goal #2 – Education: Higher Education

To make available an accessible, quality public higher education at an affordable cost that prepares Mississippians to become productive, financially self-sufficient members of society while meeting the human resource needs of Mississippi and its employers, including the creation of new jobs through the commercialization of university-based research.

Category: Commercialization of Academic Research — Relevant Benchmark #1

- Number of private-sector companies created as a result of activities at Mississippi public universities.

Statewide Goal #3 – Public Safety and Order

To protect the public's safety, including providing timely and appropriate responses to emergencies and disasters, and to operate a fair and effective system of justice.

Category: Emergency Preparedness — Relevant Benchmark #1

- Average emergency response time to natural and man-made disasters.
- Average time for businesses to recover following a natural or man-made disaster.

Statewide Goal #4 – Natural Resources

To ensure that current and future generations have access to the state's abundant natural resources through restoration, protection, conservation, and wise development of those resources.

Category: Energy — Relevant Benchmark #1

- Per capita energy consumption in British thermal units (BTUs).
- Total energy production in trillion British thermal units (BTUs).
- Renewable energy production in kilowatt hours.
- Number of alternative fuel and hybrid-electric vehicles registered in Mississippi.

Statewide Goal #5 – Infrastructure

To ensure the construction and maintenance of infrastructure, including roadways, waterways, railways, airports, water and sewer systems, pipelines, electricity lines, broadband connections, and public buildings, adequate to meet the needs of citizens and the business community and to foster economic growth.

Category: Transportation — Relevant Benchmark #1

- Public airport utilization, capacity, and connectivity.
- Port utilization, capacity, and connectivity.
- Measure of the state's rail system capacity and condition.
- Percentage of the state's rail mileage that can accommodate double-stacked cars.
- Ton-miles of freight shipped by railroad.

- Public transit utilization and capacity.

Category: Public Utilities — Relevant Benchmark #2

MDA provides leadership in interagency coordination to encourage infrastructure investment that drives economic development, improves project readiness, and supports business location and expansion decisions. Factors evaluated include:

- Percentage of local sewer and water infrastructure in immediate need of repair and replacement and associated costs.
- Ratio of supply of electricity generation capacity to demand.

4. Overview of the Agency 5-Year Strategic Plan

Competition for domestic and foreign direct investment remains strong, particularly in the Southeastern United States. Companies increasingly evaluate locations based on infrastructure readiness, available sites, workforce capacity, speed of execution, and the ability of public partners to solve complex project needs. Of considerable note, energy availability has re-emerged as one of the most important location factors. Mississippi's economic development strategy for FY 2028 through FY 2032 must therefore remain focused, practical, and responsive to market demand.

Site availability remains a dominant factor in major development projects. Investments through MDA's Site Development Grant Program have helped position Mississippi more competitively for large-scale industrial opportunities. Over the next five years, MDA will continue to support prudent site due diligence, site improvement, third-party evaluation, and local partner readiness so communities can compete for projects requiring credible, marketable, and project-ready locations. MDA has sought additional resources to deploy for energy-ready site development and will continue to pursue avenues for building capacity, reliability and resilience, affordability, and optionality.

MDA's five strategic focus areas are business environment, infrastructure and available real estate, workforce, economic development service delivery, and tourism outreach. These focus areas align with statewide economic development and infrastructure benchmarks and are intended to increase private-sector investment, support job creation, raise wages, expand commercial activity, and strengthen Mississippi's long-term economic base.

MDA will continue to work with local economic developers, utility partners, universities, elected officials, state agencies such as Accelerate MS, federal partners, and statewide organizations to coordinate economic development strategy. This coordination includes support for business recruitment and retention, workforce alignment, community competitiveness, incentives and grant administration, research, marketing, and site-development readiness.

MDA will also continue strengthening service delivery through performance management, divisional metrics, staff development, research capacity, internal systems, and program administration. These efforts are intended to improve accountability, resource alignment, and the agency's ability to respond to companies, communities, legislators, and other stakeholders.

Tourism, film, creative economy assets, and Mississippi's cultural, recreational, and culinary offerings remain important contributors to the state's economy.

5. External/Internal Assessment

Redirection of Agency Mission Due to Changes in State Statutes or Regulations

MDA's authorized headcount and program responsibilities have changed over time while grant administration and related compliance responsibilities have increased. These changes have placed additional pressure on divisions responsible for business incentives, community incentives, finance, accounting, and grant compliance. Changes to State and Federal compliance standards, primarily in grant management/oversight and close-out procedures, have intensified over the last years. This is a direct response to the increased availability of funding and a continuous stream of compliance failures on the national and state levels. MDA supports these efforts but cannot continue to keep pace with the proliferation of new and expanding grant programs without making some additional changes in grant administration and compliance procedures. MDA has sought expert advice in these regards, primarily for its federal programs. MDA is developing AI-based compliance efforts but will still need additional personnel to manage compliance.

Economic Changes

Changes in federal and global economic conditions, including tariffs, trade policy, energy availability, and industry competitiveness, affect MDA's recruitment, trade, energy, and business-support functions. MDA will continue monitoring these conditions and identifying opportunities for Mississippi businesses and communities.

The film industry remains highly competitive, and Mississippi continues to compete with states offering attractive incentive structures. MDA has sought outside research to help determine future policy recommendations and ensure Mississippi remains competitive for filmed projects.

Federal Funding Availability

MDA has experienced uncertainty in certain federal funding streams, including funding connected to energy-related activities and international trade support. Sustained reductions could affect Energy and Natural Resources, Minority and Small Business Development, Community Incentives, Trade, and other federally supported functions. The Governor's Office of Military Affairs continues to monitor federal military and defense-related risks and opportunities that may affect Mississippi installations and surrounding communities.

Technological Advances

Artificial intelligence, automation, and data-driven tools are transforming both MDA operations and the broader business environment. MDA is adopting technology to improve internal efficiency and is working with partners to position Mississippi for opportunities created by AI, advanced technologies, and related workforce needs.

Demographic Changes

Mississippi's labor market conditions and perceptions of workforce availability affect business recruitment and expansion. MDA will continue supporting strategies that improve talent attraction and retention. Through our Welcome Home Mississippi program we are developing new marketing campaigns to enhance talent attraction and retention.

Management Policies and Internal Capacity

MDA has reviewed its organizational structure, strategic imperatives, goal-setting methods, performance evaluation processes, budgeting, and internal procedures. This review has clarified expectations, supported agencywide objectives, and identified areas for improvement, including grant compliance capacity, research support, training, and program administration.

Disaster Recovery

MDA has seen a drop in the number of personnel related to disaster recovery, primarily from the drop in Hurricane Katrina related grants awarded and administered. However, an influx of disaster recovery funds has recently been awarded to the state. This has resulted in an increase in disaster-related activity. MDA has shuffled its personnel resources to accommodate this growing need, but the business model may suffer in other ways.

5.1 Internal Management Systems Used to Evaluate Agency Performance

MDA evaluates performance through agencywide objectives, divisional goals, key results, quarterly reviews, performance evaluations, budget monitoring, grant and incentive tracking, compliance reviews, and internal reporting. Beginning in April 2024, MDA reviewed its organizational structure, strategic priorities, goal-setting approach, performance assessment methods, budgeting, and internal processes.

As part of this process, MDA uses an Objectives and Key Results framework (as described in the book *Measure What Matters*, by John Doerr) to connect qualitative strategic priorities with quantifiable measures of progress. Division directors work with the executive team to develop division-level objectives and key results that support agencywide priorities. Divisions participate in quarterly division reviews that examine objectives, legislative and federal reporting requirements, personnel assignments, budget compliance, operational issues, and other performance indicators.

Objectives are included in division director performance evaluations and help determine whether divisions are meeting agreed-upon expectations. When a division does not meet its key results, the division director and executive team identify contributing issues and determine whether corrective action, additional resources, revised processes, training, or other management decisions are needed. This system gives MDA a recurring method for reviewing management policies, operational procedures, tracking systems, organizational structure, and budgetary needs.

6. Agency Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Measures by Program

MDA serves as the state's agency for economic development, tourism, and community advancement. Its main responsibilities include supporting private-sector job creation through business locations and industry expansions, attracting new investments and revenue, and promoting the state's business opportunities and cultural features internationally.

MDA's primary areas of activity include business development, community development, site development, tourism, and brand promotion. Utilizing state and federal funding, MDA competes for job growth and investment, helps municipalities and rural communities prepare infrastructure for economic development, and promotes Mississippi as a location for tourism and business.

To achieve these objectives, MDA oversees four principal programs: Economic Development/Incentives, Community Development/Incentives, Support Services, and Tourism (Visit MS). Annual program goals and outcomes are established in line with appropriations and are described below along with corresponding objectives and outcomes.

The following goals, objectives, strategies, and measures are organized by program for FY 2028 through FY 2032.

Program 1: Economic Development and Incentives

GOAL A: Promote Mississippi as a highly regarded location for new business investment and grow the state's economy faster than surrounding states.

OBJECTIVE A.1.

Support the creation of 3,000 new careers and \$1.7 billion in investment by recruiting targeted new companies to Mississippi.

Outcome: Growth and strengthening of Mississippi employment through new business recruitment.

A.1.1 STRATEGY: Develop comprehensive short- and long-term recruitment strategies through marketing and research to identify target companies in strategic sectors.

Output: Increase international contacts, recruitment missions, partner recruiting events, trade shows, marketing campaigns, and media outreach, subject to available appropriations.

Output: Generate 225 qualified national prospects.

Output: Complete 1,000 national recruitment contacts.

Outcome: 3,000 new careers and \$1.7 billion in investment.

Efficiency: Use strategic, data-driven research and marketing to support a 10-fold return on investment and increased win rate.

A.1.2 STRATEGY: Increase international recruitment interactions in target countries and in Mississippi through focused outreach that expands FDI source networks and strengthens existing contacts.

Output: Increase consultant and company contacts to 1,000.

Outcome: Increase the number of qualified projects Mississippi can compete for and win.

A.1.3 STRATEGY: Implement a more strategic approach to engagement with foreign representatives and consultants based on country-specific recruitment strategies.

Output: Increase lead generation in target countries.

Outcome: Higher-quality FDI leads, higher success rate, and improved return on investment.

A.1.4 STRATEGY: Market the value of a Mississippi location in FDI target countries to achieve 15 new global business contacts.

Output: Increase quality of engagement in selected target countries.

Output: Increase FDI contacts to 1,500

Outcome: More potential FDI projects.

A.1.5 STRATEGY: Provide trade opportunities to existing Mississippi businesses in growth export markets and expand international relationships.

Output: Increase trade contacts to 1,500.

Output: Ten export trade missions and target-sector trade shows, including virtual events.

Outcome: Net export sales of \$2.2 million statewide.

Outcome: Twelve new Mississippi companies enter the export market and 38 Mississippi firms expand current exports.

Outcome: More opportunities for existing industries to do business in foreign markets.

Efficiency: Use the federal State Trade Expansion Program to reduce eligible export promotion costs for participating businesses.

GOAL B: Support and enhance the competitiveness of new and existing minority- and women-owned businesses to broaden the economic base and maximize opportunities.

OBJECTIVE B.1. Create additional wealth in Mississippi for minority and women entrepreneurs through increased sales opportunities, job creation, business expansion, and capital investment.

Outcome: Increased contracting opportunities and improved technical assistance delivery to diverse and emerging businesses.

B.1.1 STRATEGY: Define the objectives of each program and offering, assess effectiveness, and refine or eliminate programs as needed.

Output: 8,000 minority and small business contacts.

Output: Technical assistance to 3,000 disadvantaged contacts.

Output: Number of programs reviewed and refined.

Outcome: More accessible programs, directory tools, bonding support, Contractors Academy administration, and APEX Accelerator support that help minority- and women-owned businesses compete for contracting opportunities.

Efficiency: Use print, social media, virtual, and in-person outreach to reach businesses statewide.

B.1.2 STRATEGY: Provide managerial, financial, and technical assistance for minority- and women-owned businesses to compete for federal, state, local, and commercial contracts.

Output: Process 250 minority business certification applications among 3,000 interested businesses.

Outcome: Support 150 state contracts with minority- and women-owned businesses for \$55,000,000 in value.

Outcome: Assist 15 new startup minority- and women-owned businesses.

Outcome: Increase certified minority- and women-owned businesses by 35 each year.

Outcome: Graduate 50 contractors through the Contractors Academy.

Outcome: Increase use of assistance programs such as the Minority Surety Bond Guaranty Program and Capital Access Construction Loan Program.

Efficiency: Increase the rate of contracting opportunities available for bid by minority businesses by 3% annually.

B.1.3 STRATEGY: Continue promoting legislatively determined efforts for minority and small business state public procurement.

Output: Collaborate with 86 state agency heads or procurement officers.

Outcome: Increase the number of state minority contracts awarded.

B.1.4 STRATEGY: Promote federal contracting opportunities through the APEX Accelerator

Output: Host workshops, seminars and training sessions to increase awareness and promote opportunity for federal contracting opportunities.

Outcome: Increase the number of eligible state contractors

Outcome: Increase the number of contracts awarded to Mississippi-based firms.

GOAL C: Grow the state's economy by supporting the expansion of existing in-state industries.

OBJECTIVE C.1.

Support the creation of 3,000 jobs and 30 business expansions through existing industry research, contacts, and surveys.

Outcome: Growth and strengthening of Mississippi employment through existing industry expansion.

C.1.1 STRATEGY: Work with existing employers to identify opportunities for growth and remove barriers to growth when possible.

Output: 750 contacts.

Output: Meet with key contacts, local developers, and existing companies throughout the year.

Output: Conduct corporate or regional headquarters visits to identify and develop expansion opportunities.

Outcome: 3,000 new jobs and \$300 million in investment.

Efficiency: Percentage of expansion projects won compared with projects worked.

Efficiency: Use digital tools, research staff, and coordination with local economic development entities to reduce project manager time required for existing-industry activities.

C.1.2 STRATEGY: Partner with colleges, universities, AccelerateMS, and workforce allies to maintain current awareness of workforce capacity, research and development milestones, and educational offerings.

Output: Regular coordination with AccelerateMS and workforce allies.

Outcome: Improved ability to identify and address workforce issues for existing industries before issues threaten ongoing operations.

GOAL D: Provide an efficient and economical energy system through a statewide plan that supports public and private consumers.

OBJECTIVE D.1.

Maximize use of energy efficiency and renewable options through communication, outreach, technology deployment, and partnerships.

Outcome: Improved energy efficiency, energy awareness, and energy resilience for public and private sectors.

D.1.1 STRATEGY: Promote the division to internal and external groups and advance initiatives by maintaining key stakeholder relationships.

Output: Connect with at least five external stakeholder groups, such as the Mississippi Energy Institute and universities.

Output: Increase energy efficiency and renewable energy direct contacts to 10,000.

Outcome: Programs and initiatives that bring together government and the private sector to promote sound energy policies.

D.1.2 STRATEGY: Provide technical and financial assistance in Mississippi industrial, commercial, and institutional sectors.

Output: Conduct energy audits for public and private entities and provide information on energy cost-saving measures.

Outcome: Energy savings that positively affect operating costs and help identify investment priorities.

Efficiency: Energy savings identified per audit and number/type of energy efficiency measures installed through grant and loan programs.

D.1.3 STRATEGY: Coordinate development and implementation of a general energy management plan for state-owned and state-operated facilities.

Output: Prepare the State Energy Management Program annual legislative report and provide technical assistance to agencies developing five-year energy management plans.

Outcome: Strategies and best practices that foster energy efficiency awareness and maximize energy efficiency.
Efficiency: Identification of poor-performing buildings using key metrics to support cost-saving measures and investment priorities.

D.1.4 STRATEGY: Promote energy awareness throughout institutional, industrial, and commercial sectors.

Output: Conduct training sessions and programs for educators, facility operators, building operators, students, and the public.

Outcome: Improved knowledge of building energy efficiency and general energy awareness among trainees.
Efficiency: Number of training participants, certifications, and continuing education units issued.

D.1.5 STRATEGY: Coordinate energy emergency planning, response, and mitigation for Mississippi's energy sector.

Output: Develop and maintain the Mississippi Energy Security Plan.

Outcome: Improved collaboration among federal and state agencies to restore private, institutional, and commercial systems following energy emergencies.

Efficiency: Timely responses and coordinated notifications to state leaders, private-sector entities, institutions, media, and the public during energy emergencies.

Efficiency: Number of training exercises and emergency activations requiring immediate mobilization.

GOAL E: Utilize federal research laboratories and military installations to attract and grow economic activity.

OBJECTIVE E.1.

Grow military spending, support contracting opportunities with Mississippi businesses, and encourage new military and research missions through the Governor's Office of Military Affairs and MDA partner the Mississippi Enterprise for Technology.

Outcome: Increased defense-related economic activity, contracting opportunities, missions, and job growth.

E.1.1 STRATEGY: Support military communities, Defense Communities Development Council planning, and senior military leader engagement to attract relevant military missions.

Output: Support military communities leading to community and installation growth.

Output: Work with the Defense Communities Development Council to formulate statewide planning.

Outcome: Defense communities are better positioned to attract new missions and job growth.

E.1.2 STRATEGY: Support minority- and small-business growth through identification of installation needs.

Output: Work with installation leadership to identify upcoming development projects and vendor or contractor gaps.

Outcome: Greater awareness of contracting opportunities with local vendors.

E.1.3 STRATEGY: Strengthen relationships with legislatively recognized external partners, including Mississippi Enterprise for Technology, to explore innovation economy opportunities.

Output: Engage venture-backed companies around federal test and evaluation assets in Mississippi.

Outcome: Use external partners and federal laboratory or technology resources to promote innovation economy growth.

Efficiency: Formalized external partnerships extend capacity without requiring immediate MDA headcount increases.

GOAL F: Grow Mississippi's economy by increasing the number of filmed projects produced in the state.

OBJECTIVE F.1.

Recruit filmed productions to Mississippi while growing a Mississippi-based film industry that supports local hiring of trained Mississippi crews and companies.

Outcome: Increased filmed projects, film workforce participation, and related economic activity.

F.1.1 STRATEGY: Build relationships with producers, directors, and other industry decision makers, including those with Mississippi ties.

Output: Increase promotional activities, event marketing, festival engagement, and targeted advertising to sell Mississippi as a filming destination.

Outcome: Increased number of feature films, commercials, television shows, and other filmed projects in the pipeline.

F.1.2 STRATEGY: Support activities that facilitate growth of a state film workforce.

Output: Share workforce training curricula with educational programs, support training at film festivals and events, and facilitate film internship programs and educational outreach.

Outcome: A trained, stable, and growing local film workforce available for hire by productions locating in Mississippi.

Efficiency: Behavioral targeting allows more efficient use of advertising dollars.

Program 2: Community Development and Incentives

GOAL A: Support community assets and infrastructure so more Mississippi communities can compete for jobs and investment and improve quality of life.

OBJECTIVE A.1.

Administer community infrastructure financial support to increase the competitiveness of Mississippi communities for job creation and capital investment projects.

Outcome: Communities are better prepared to compete for economic development opportunities and provide improved public infrastructure and facilities that support quality of life and population retention.

A.1.1 STRATEGY: Award and administer grant and loan programs in compliance with law and program intent, as funding allows.

Output: Award and administer at least 100 grant and loan programs out of at least 225 requests for a total of \$50,000,000, or as funding allows.

Output: Provide 10 public infrastructure grants and loans annually to local governments in coordination with economic development projects.

Output: Provide 50 basic public infrastructure grants and loans annually to municipal and county governments for general community development.

Output: Close 25% of total open grants and have 10 loans paid in full.

Output: Monitor active projects for compliance with guidelines and laws.

Outcome: Limit findings issued on programs audited by the Office of the State Auditor or the federal government.

A.1.2 STRATEGY: Better align community development projects with economic development priorities.

Output: Review programs for effectiveness and modify guidelines to better align programs with job creation objectives.

Outcome: Programs are more directly connected to job creation, long-term community competitiveness, and effective investment of taxpayer funds.

GOAL B: Provide effective financing and incentive options to meet the needs of prospective businesses and support Mississippi businesses as they grow in domestic and international markets.

OBJECTIVE B.1.

Generate an overall \$10-to-\$1 leverage of private capital investment to public investment in economic development projects.

Outcome: Efficient application of incentives that supports location and expansion projects generating career opportunities and substantial investment.

B.1.1 STRATEGY: Continue using an incentives framework so offerings remain structured, understood, and timely for project managers and leadership.

Outcome: Consistency and transparency in the incentive decision-making process.

B.1.2 STRATEGY: Administer state grant, loan, and tax incentive programs efficiently, streamline processes, and improve program monitoring and servicing.

Output: Implement and improve grants, loans, and tax incentives management systems, review processes, monitoring tools, and program procedures.

Outcome: More efficient program administration, timelier customer service, user-friendly documents and processes, greater transparency, and stronger reporting capabilities.

Outcome: Review 100% of projects that have met a monitoring deadline for compliance with program requirements.

Outcome: Reduce maximum time to payment while maintaining consistent oversight.

B.1.3 STRATEGY: Provide guidance and technical assistance on statutory and discretionary incentives to businesses, consultants, internal audiences, and economic development professionals.

Output: Increase awareness of state incentives offerings internally and externally and improve customer comfort with the incentives process.

B.1.4 STRATEGY: Develop project-ready sites around the state to compete for economic development opportunities.

Output: Manage the Site Development Grant Program, which supports local due diligence and eligible site improvements.

Outcome: More sites have data needed by companies and consultants before location decisions are made.

Outcome: More Mississippi sites advance through the site-selection process.

GOAL C: Provide education and assistance with community development projects that can lead to economic growth in small and disadvantaged communities.

OBJECTIVE C.1.

Assist communities in becoming more desirable places for public and private investment through community and economic development training and technical assistance for diverse local leadership teams.

Outcome: Increased local leadership capacity to plan and implement community and economic development strategies.

C.1.1 STRATEGY: Coordinate with economic development organizations and utility partners to plan and manage the Aspire Mississippi cohort.

Output: Four to six teams of approximately 10 local leaders participate in monthly virtual and in-person sessions over nine months.

Output: Four to six community-based projects are initiated and completed.

Outcome: Increased knowledge and skills in community and economic development among local leaders.

Outcome: Community-based team project benchmarks are met.

OBJECTIVE C.2.

Provide responsive technical assistance that helps local leaders solve problems through coordinated stakeholder engagement.

Outcome: More coordinated and efficient delivery of technical assistance with measurable local impact.

C.2.1 STRATEGY: Build a stakeholder cohort through the Mississippi Main Street Association that will ensure best practices for main street grant program administration and project identification.

Output: Provide regular opportunities for stakeholders to coordinate assistance being provided to communities.

Output: Grant program is managed efficiently and effectively.

Outcome: Reduced duplication and greater impact from technical assistance providers at the local level.

Outcome: Grants administered in accordance with federal and state laws.

Outcome: Community and main street development strengthened.

GOAL D: Utilize the existing retiree attraction program structure and expand to include family attraction and repatriation of former Mississippians.

OBJECTIVE D.1.

Support communities seeking to attract retirees to Mississippi.

Outcome: Increased retiree attraction activity, lead conversion, and certified retirement community participation.

D.1.1 STRATEGY: Strengthen Welcome Home Mississippi retirement program and assist certified retirement communities through statewide and localized marketing and promotion.

Output: Receive at least 1,000 direct leads and disseminate those leads to certified retirement cities.

Output: Provide technical assistance and training to the 12 retiree attraction directors.

Output: Market certification benefits to selected Mississippi communities.

Outcome: Convert 5% of direct leads into retirees relocating to Mississippi.

Outcome: Increase lead generation by certified retirement community directors by 25% over the prior year.

Outcome: Increase certified retirement cities in Mississippi to 15.

OBJECTIVE D.2.

Evaluate expansion of Welcome Home Mississippi to include family attraction and repatriation of former Mississippians.

Outcome: More families and professionals move or return to Mississippi, supporting economic growth.

D.2.1 STRATEGY: Use research to determine the market for family attraction and repatriation, including professionals needed by Mississippi's private-sector economy.

Output: Expanded program research and design.

Outcome: More families and professionals move or return to Mississippi.

Efficiency: Expanded focus supports other MDA economic development, workforce, and community programs.

Program 3: Support Services

GOAL A: Support departmental staff and Mississippi's economic development community by providing systems, services, and information that facilitate effective and efficient achievement of MDA's mission.

OBJECTIVE A.1.

Strengthen agencywide marketing, stakeholder coordination, career development, financial management, and information technology support.

Outcome: Improved internal service delivery, operational efficiency, and agencywide performance management.

A.1.1 STRATEGY: Position Mississippi strategically in domestic and foreign markets through consumer-targeted advertising, marketing, and events.

Output: Develop and execute domestic and international economic development events, including virtual events.

Output: Produce consumer-targeted marketing collateral and advertising campaigns.

Output: Generate 300,000 page views to MDA's primary website showcasing Mississippi's competitive advantages and success stories.

A.1.2 STRATEGY: Strengthen initiative and support networks among MEC and MEDC membership to align with business climate goals and objectives.

Output: Consolidated messaging and public-private collaboration.

Efficiency: Economies of scale reduce duplication of effort.

A.1.3 STRATEGY: Implement a performance-based career path for accountability and excellence.

Output: Review staff regularly for progress toward agreed-upon metrics.

Output: Use budgeting processes that reflect the demonstrable effectiveness of each MDA unit.

Outcome: A more effective and efficient MDA with reduced turnover.

A.1.4 STRATEGY: Engage industry stakeholders and policymakers in collaborative work toward statewide business climate goals.

Output: Public- and private-sector discussions about economic and community development.

Outcome: More informed and capable leadership statewide.

A.1.5 STRATEGY: Improve financial management systems and processes to support effective utilization and management of agency fiscal resources and support services program administration of less than 9.5% of total MDA budget.

Output: More efficient processing of invoices and economic development reimbursement requests.

Efficiency: Improved customer service and responsiveness to companies, developers, and consultants.

A.1.6 STRATEGY: Maintain and improve information technology that assists MDA in meeting economic development and community program objectives.

Output: Use research, analytics, and technology to support efficient work in and out of the office.

Output: Process business intelligence and target market requests more efficiently.

Efficiency: Improved customer service and responsiveness to companies, developers, and consultants.

GOAL B: Support communities and leaders around the state so they can compete for jobs and investment through asset-development efforts.

OBJECTIVE B.1.

Provide direction to communities on improving economic development competitiveness.

Outcome: Improved local capacity to plan, prepare, and compete for industrial, commercial, and retail development.

B.1.1 STRATEGY: Offer group training to leaders in communities on long-range plans for economic development success.

Output: Host 10 local training sessions around the state.

Outcome: Local elected officials and leaders improve understanding of how economic development success can be achieved.

B.1.2 STRATEGY: Provide direct training to local elected officials and relevant partners.

Output: Develop and implement First Steps training programs.

Output: Provide one-on-one consultation related to fee-in-lieu, project development, site development, and economic development program creation.

Outcome: Stronger working relationships between MDA and local elected officials.

Outcome: More sites become eligible for site development funding, improving competitiveness for significant projects.

Program 4: Special Projects and Pass-Throughs

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Program 5: Tourism

GOAL A: Grow the state's economy through aggressive advertising and marketing of Mississippi tourism assets in targeted media markets and through an effective mix of media platforms.

OBJECTIVE A.1.

Host 30 million visitors resulting in \$7.5 billion in Mississippi expenditures.

Outcome: Increased visitation and visitor spending in Mississippi.

A.1.1 STRATEGY: Invest in advertising outlets and Visit Mississippi program activations aligned with key pillars, annual themes, state regions, and geographic demographics.

Output: Print, digital, broadcast, streaming media, sales, sports, outdoor publications, guidebooks, digital influencers, website and social media content, research, and data analytics.

Outcome: Generate 40,000 tourist inquiries and 1.3 million page views to the Visit Mississippi website.

Outcome: Increase visitation, visitor spending, and tourism-related revenue.

Efficiency: Higher return on every \$1 spent on advertising and marketing.

Efficiency: Track program success and ROI through research services.

A.1.2 STRATEGY: Strengthen regional and international partnerships to sell Mississippi as a destination internationally and connect Mississippi partners with global contacts.

Output: Media buys, social media campaigns, and direct marketing to targeted international markets.

Outcome: Increase international travelers and international expenditures in Mississippi.

A.1.3 STRATEGY: Use market-specific tactics to build international programs and increase international travel from established and developing markets.

Output: Participate in international sales and media missions and trade shows.

Output: Host international trade and media familiarization tours with Mississippi DMOs and attractions.

Output: Conduct joint marketing and trade show participation with CVBs, DMOs, convention centers, and venues.

Output: Use international in-market representatives and regional marketing organizations such as Travel South International.

Outcome: International travelers stay longer, spend more, and increase Mississippi revenue and recognition as a destination in the American Southeast.

A.1.4 STRATEGY: Continue developing leisure, group, business, sports, and outdoor programs to increase domestic visitor spending year over year.

Output: Coordinate Visit Mississippi trade show booths with Mississippi DMOs, attractions, and venues.

Output: Distribute multi-city and regional itineraries and fulfill itinerary planning requests.

Outcome: Increased tourism-related spending and length of stay by domestic visitors.

GOAL B: Increase brand recognition, asset awareness, and positive media coverage, resulting in increased economic development and leisure/cultural tourism travel to Mississippi through the state welcome centers.

OBJECTIVE B.1.

Increase visitor engagement through, cultural programs, inquiry fulfillment, and brand-building activities originating from welcome centers throughout the state.

Outcome: Increased visitor engagement, lead conversion, positive coverage, and tourism-related spending.

B.1.1 STRATEGY: Maintain Mississippi's 12 state welcome centers and cultural programs, including historic trail marker programs, to increase new and repeat visitor engagement and achieve 2,842,273 tourists registered per year.

Output: Staff development and hospitality training for welcome center employees.

Output: Current tour guides, brochures, calendars, and travel information for Mississippi events, attractions, lodging, and dining.

Output: Promotion of the Mississippi Blues Trail, Mississippi Freedom Trail, Mississippi Country Music Trail, and Mississippi Writers Trail.

Outcome: More drive-market and drive-through visitors stop and spend at Mississippi attractions, events, restaurants, and hotels.

Efficiency: Measure pitches, promotions, earned coverage, and consumer activations through monthly reporting, lead inquiry, and fulfillment data.

